EXHIBIT INDEX

2.1	Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of April 21, 2010, by and among Qwest, CenturyLink, and SB44 Acquisition Company (included as Annex A to the joint proxy statement prospectus forming a part of this Registration Statement
	and incorporated herein by reference)
5.1	Opinion of Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrère & Denègre, LLP
8.1	Opinion of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz
8.2	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Floin LLP
23.1	Consent of Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrère & Denègre, LLP (included as part of its opinion filed as
	Exhibit 5.1 hereto and incorporated herein by reference)
23.2	Consent of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz (included as part of its opinion filed as Exhibit 8.1 hereto and incorporated
	herein by reference)
23.3	Consent of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (included as part of its opinion filed as Exhibit 8.2 hereto and incorporated herein by reference)
23.4	Consent of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm
23.5	Consent of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm
24.1*	Power of Attorney
99.1	Consent of Barclays Capital Inc.
99.2	Consent of Evercore Group, L.L.C.
99.3	Consent of J.P. Morgan Securities Inc.
99.4	Consent of Lazard Frères & Co. LLC
99.5	Consent of Deutsche Bank Securities Inc.
99.6	Consent of Morgan Stanley & Co. Incorporated
99.7	Consent of Perella Weinberg Partners LP
99.8	Form of Proxy of Century Link, Inc.
99.9	Form of Voting Instruction Cards of CenturyLink, Inc.
99.10	Form of Proxy of Owest Communications International Inc.
99.11*	Consent of Edward A. Mueller to be named as a director

^{*} Previously filed.



CenturyLink, Inc. 100 CenturyLink Drive Monroe, Louisiana 71203 Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have acted as special counsel to CenturyLink, Inc., a Louisiana corporation ("CenturyLink"), in connection with (i) the proposed merger contemplated by the Agreement and Plan of Merger dated as of April 21, 2010 (the "Merger Agreement"), among Qwest Communications International Inc., a Delaware corporation, CenturyLink and SB44 Acquisition Company, a Delaware corporation and wholly owned subsidiary of CenturyLink ("Merger Sub"), and (ii) the preparation of the Registration Statement on Form S 4 (Registration No. 333 167339) (the "Registration Statement", which term includes amendments thereto through the date hereof but does not include any other document or agreement whether or not specifically referred to or incorporated therein or attached as an exhibit, annex or schedule thereto) initially filed by CenturyLink with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on June 4, 2010, relating to shares of CenturyLink common stock, \$1.00 par value per share (the "Shares"), issuable in accordance with the terms and subject to the conditions set forth in the Merger Agreement.

In connection with rendering this opinion, we have examined copies of the Registration Statement, the Merger Agreement, the organizational documents of CenturyLink, the corporate records of CenturyLink pertaining to the authorization of the Merger Agreement and Registration Statement, and such other documents as we have deemed necessary or appropriate as a basis for bur opinion. In conducting our examination, we have assumed without verification the legal capacity of all natural persons, the genuineness of all signatures, the authenticity of all documents submitted to us as originals, the conformity to original documents submitted to us as certified, conformed or photostatic copies, the authenticity of the originals of such copies, the due authorization, execution and delivery of all documents by all parties other than CenturyLink and Merger Sub, and the validity, binding effect and enforceability thereof on all such parties. As to questions of fact material to this opinion, we have relied upon the

JONES, WALKER, WAECHTER, POITEVENT, CARRÈRE & DENÈGRE L.L.P.

200 St. Charles Avenut — Mew Orleans, Louthara F0170-8100 — 804-850-8000 — Fax 804-850-8580 — E-blait info@jozaffraliancom — www.jozaffraliancom

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CenturyLink, Inc. July 16, 2010 Page 2

accuracy of certificates and other comparable documents of officers and representatives of CenturyLink, upon statements made to us in discussions with CenturyLink's management and upon certificates of public officials.

Based upon and subject to the foregoing, we are of the opinion that the Shares are duly authorized and, when issued following the effectiveness of the Registration Statement in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Merger Agreement (including approval of such issuance by CenturyLink's shareholders), will be legally issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

We do not express any opinion herein concerning any law other than the Louisiana Business Corporation Law (including the statutory provisions and reported judicial decisions interpreting the foregoing).

reported judicial decisions interpreting the foregoing).

We hereby consent to the filing of this opinion with the SEC as an exhibit to the Registration Statement and to the reference to us in the prospectus forming a part thereof under the heading titled "Legal Matters." In giving such consent, we do not thereby admit that we are in the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules or regulations of the SEC promulgated thereunder.

Our opinion has been furnished in accordance with the requirements of Item 21 of Form S-4 and Item 601(b)(5)(i) of Regulation S-K promulgated by the SEC, and is expressly limited to the matters set forth above. We render no opinion, whether by implication or otherwise, as to any other matters relating to CenturyLink or to the Merger Agreement, the Registration Statement or any of the transactions contemplated or discussed thereunder.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poirevent, Carrère & Denègre, L.L.P. Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrère & Denègre, L.L.P.

[Letterhead of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz] July 16, 2010

CenturyLink, Inc. 100 CenturyLink Drive Monroe, LA 71203 Ladies and Gentlemen:

Reference is made to the Registration Statement on Form S-4 (as amended through the date hereof, the "Registration Statement") of CenturyLink, Inc., a Louisiana corporation ("CenturyLink"), including the joint proxy statement-prospectus of CenturyLink and Qwest Communications International Inc., a Delaware corporation ("Owest"), forming a part thereof, relating to the proposed merger of SB44 Acquisition Company, a Delaware corporation and wholly owned subsidiary of CenturyLink, with and into Qwest.

We have participated in the preparation of the discussion set forth in the section entitled "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences of the Merger" in the Registration Statement. In our opinion, such discussion of those consequences, insofar as it summarizes U.S. federal income tax law, is

accurate in all material respects

We hereby consent to the filing of this opinion with the Securities and Exchange Commission as an exhibit to the Registration Statement, and to the references therein to us. In giving such consent, we do not thereby admit that we are in the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

Very truly yours, /s/ Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz

July 16, 2010

Owest Communications International Inc. 1801 California Street Denver, CO 80202

Re: Offer to Exchange Shares of CenturyLink, Inc.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have acted as United States tax counsel to Owest Communications International Inc., a Delaware corporation ("Owest") in connection with the offer we have acted as officed States tax Counset to West Communications international method. A Delaware corporation (Qwest) in connection with the (free "Offer") by CenturyLink, Inc., a Louisiana corporation, to exchange shares of its common stock for shares of common stock of Qwest, as described in the joint proxy statement/Prospectus dated July 15, 2010 (the "Prospectus"). This opinion is being delivered in connection with the Prospectus that was included in the Registration Statement of CenturyLink, Inc. on Form S 4 (the "Registration Statement") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "Commission") under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), and in accordance with the requirements of Item 601(b)(8) of Regulation S-K under the Securities Act.

In connection with our opinion, we have examined and relied upon originals or copies, certified or otherwise identified to our satisfaction, of the Prospectus, the Registration Statement and such other documents, certificates and records as we have deemed necessary or appropriate as a basis for the

opinion set forth herein.

In rendering our opinion, we have participated in the preparation of the Prospectus and the Registration Statement. Our opinion is conditioned on, among other things, the initial and continuing accuracy of the facts, information, assumptions and representations set forth therein. În our examination, we have assumed the genuineness of all signatures, the legal capacity of natural persons, the authenticity of all documents submitted to us as originals, the conformity to original documents of all documents submitted to us as certified or photostatic copies and the authenticity of the originals of such documents. We also have assumed that the transactions related to the Offer will be consummated in the manner contemplated by the Prospectus and the Registration Statement. In addition, we have relied upon statements and representations of the officers and other representatives of Qwest and others, and we have assumed that such statements and representations are and will continue to be correct without regard to any qualification as to knowledge or belief.

Our opinion is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, Treasury

Qwest Communications International Inc.

July 16, 2010

Page 2

Department regulations promulgated thereunder, judicial decisions, published positions of the Internal Revenue Service, and such other authorities as we have considered relevant, all as in effect as of the date of this opinion and all of which are subject to differing interpretations or change at any time (possibly with retroactive effect). A change in the authorities or the truth, accuracy, or completeness of any of the facts, information, documents, corporate records, statements, representations, or assumptions upon which our opinion is based could affect the conclusions expressed herein. There can be no assurance, moreover, that our opinion expressed herein will be accepted by the Internal Revenue Service or, if challenged, by a court.

Based upon and subject to the foregoing, and subject to the qualifications, exceptions, assumptions and limitations contained herein or in the Prospectus, we hereby confirm that, although the discussion set forth in the Prospectus under the heading "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences of the Merger" does not purport to discuss all possible United States federal income tax consequences of the Offer to holders of Qwest common stock, it is our opinion that such discussion constitutes, in all material respects, a fair and accurate summary of the United States federal income tax consequences of the Offer under current United States federal income tax law.

Except as set forth above, we express no opinion to any party as to the tax consequences, whether federal, state, local or foreign, of the Offer or of any transactions related thereto or contemplated by the Prospectus. This Opinion is as of the date hereof, and we are under no obligation to supplement or revise our analysis to reflect any legal developments or factual matters arising subsequent to the date hereof or the impact of any information, document, certificate, record, statement, representation, covenant, or assumption relied upon herein that becomes incorrect or untrue.

In accordance with the requirements of Item 601(b)(23) under the Securities Act, we hereby consent to the filing of this opinion as Exhibit 8.2 to the Registration Statement. We also consent to the use of our name under the headings "Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences of the Merger" and "Legal Matters" in the Registration Statement. In giving such consent, we do not thereby admit that we are in the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act or the rules and regulations of the Commission thereunder.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

The Board of Directors CenturyLink, Inc.:

We consent to the use of our reports dated March 1, 2010, with respect to the consolidated balance sheets of Century Tel, Inc. and subsidiaries (the Company) as of December 31, 2009 and 2008, and the related consolidated statements of income, comprehensive income, cash flows, and stockholders' equity for each of the years in the three—year period ended December 31, 2009, the related financial statement schedule, and the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2009, which reports appear in the December 31, 2009 annual report on Form 10-K of CenturyTel, Inc. incorporated by reference in this Registration Statement on Form S-4 and to the references to our firm under the headings "Selected Historical Financial Data of CenturyLink" and "Experts" in the joint proxy statement—prospectus, which is part of this Registration Statement.

Our report on the consolidated financial statements and the related financial statement schedule includes an explanatory paragraph regarding the Company's change in the method of accounting for business combinations, non-controlling interests and earnings per share in 2009 and for uncertain tax positions in

2007. /s/ KPMG LLP Shreveport, Louisiana July 16, 2010

Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

The Board of Directors

Qwest Communications International Inc.:

We consent to the use of our reports dated February 16, 2010, with respect to the consolidated balance sheets of Qwest Communications International Inc. and subsidiaries as of December 31, 2009 and 2008, and the related consolidated statements of operations, stockholders' (deficit) equity and comprehensive income (loss), and cash flows for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2009, and the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2009, which reports appear in the December 31, 2009 Annual Report on Form 10-K of Qwest Communications International Inc. incorporated by reference in this Registration Statement on Form S-4 and to the references to our firm under the headings, "Selected Historical Financial Data of Qwest" and "Experts" in the joint proxy statement-prospectus, which is part of this Registration Statement. Our report with respect to the consolidated financial statements refers to the Qwest Communications International Inc.'s adoption of Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Interpretation No. 48, Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes, an interpretation of FASB Statement No. 109 (FASB Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) 740), effective January 1, 2007, and FASB Staff Position (FSP) APB 14-1, Accounting for Convertible Deht Instruments That May Be Settled in Cash Upon Conversion (Including Partial Cash Settlement) (ASC 470), and FSP Emerging Issues Task Force 03-06-1, Determining Whether Instruments Granted in Share-Based Payment Transactions Are Participating Securities (ASC 260), effective January 1, 2009.

Set MPMG LLP Denver, Colorado July 15, 2010



745 Seventh Avenue New York, NY 10019 United States

July 16, 2010

CONSENT OF BARCLAYS CAPITAL INC.

We hereby consent to (i) the inclusion of our opinion letter, dated April 21, 2010, to the Board of Directors of CenturyTel, Inc. (the "Company"), as an Annex to the joint proxy statement-prospectus that forms a part of the Registration Statement on Form S-4 of the Company, as filed by the Company on July 15, 2010 (the "Registration Statement"), relating to the proposed business combination transaction between the Company and Qwest Communications International Inc. and (ii) the references in the Registration Statement to such opinion and our firm in the Registration Statement under the heading "Oninions of CenturyLink's Financial Advisors".

International Inc. and (ii) the references in the Registration Statement to such opinion and our first in the registration Statement which the following such consent, we do not admit that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations adopted by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission thereunder, nor do we admit that we are experts with respect to any part of the Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "experts" as used in the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission thereunder. Additionally, such consent is not intended to broaden the group of recipients to which the opinion is addressed or to broaden the scope of the opinion provided.

Very truly yours,

BARCLAYS CAPITAL INC.

By: /s/ Barry Boniface

Name: Barry Boniface Title: Managing Director Evercore Group L. L. C.

July 16, 2010

The Board of Directors CenturyLink, Inc. 100 CenturyTel Drive Monroe, LA 71203

Monroc, LA 71203

We hereby consent to the inclusion of our opinion letter, dated April 21, 2010, to the Board of Directors of CenturyTel, Inc. (now known as CenturyLink, Inc.) as Annex C to, and reference thereto under the captions "Summary — Opinions of CenturyLink's Financial Advisors," "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares And The Merger — Background of the Merger," "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares And The Merger — CenturyLink's Reasons for the Merger; Recommendation of the Stock Issuance by the CenturyLink Board of Directors," and "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares And The Merger — Opinions of CenturyLink's Financial Advisors" in, the joint proxy statement—prospectus relating to the proposed merger of a wholly owned subsidiary of CenturyLink, Inc. with and into Qwest Communications International Jnc., which forms a part of Amendment No1 to the Registration Statement on Form S 4 of CenturyLink, Inc.

By giving such consent, we do not admit and hereby disclaim that we are experts with respect to any part of such Registration Statement within the

By giving such consent, we do not admit and hereby disclaim that we are experts with respect to any part of such Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "expert" as used in, or that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under, the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission promulgated thereunder.

/s/ EVERCORE GROUP L.L.C.
EVERCORE GROUP L.L.C.

CONSENT OF J.P. MORGAN SECURITIES INC.

We hereby consent to (i) the use of our opinion letter dated April 21, 2010 to the Board of Directors of CenturyLink, Inc. (the "Company") included in Annex D to the Amendment No. 1 to the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus relating to the proposed merger of the Company and Qwest Communications International Inc. and (ii) the references to such opinion in such Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus. In giving such consent, we do not admit that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission thereunder, nor do we hereby admit that we are experts with respect to any part of such Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "experts" as used in the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission thereunder. Commission thereunder.

J.P. MORGAN SECURITIES INC.

By: /s/ Marco J. Caggiano

Name: Marco J. Caggiano Title: Managing Director

July 16, 2010

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LAZARD FRÉRES & Co. LLC

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The Board of Directors Qwest Communications International Inc. 1801 California Street Denver, Colorado 80202 Dear Members of the Board:

We hereby consent to the inclusion of our opinion letter, dated April 21, 2010, to the Board of Directors of Qwest Communications International Inc. ("Qwest") as Annex E to, and reference thereto under the headings "Summary — The Merger and the Merger Agreement — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors", "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Qwest's Reasons for the Merger; Recommendation of the Merger by the Qwest Board of Directors" and "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors" in, Amendment No. 1 to the joint proxy statement/prospectus relating to the proposed transaction involving Qwest and CenturyLink, Inc. ("CenturyLink"), which joint proxy statement/prospectus forms a part of the Registration Statement on Form S-4 of CenturyLink (the "Registration Statement"). By giving such consent, we do not thereby admit that we are experts with respect to any part of such Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "expert" as used in, or that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under, the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission promulgated thereunder.

Very truly yours,

LAZARD FRÈRES & CO. LLC

By: /s/ Marc H. Katz

July 16, 2010

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Owest Communications International Inc. 1801 California Street Denver, CO 80202 (303) 992 1400

CONSENT OF DEUTSCHE BANK SECURITIES INC.

Dear Members of the Board of Qwest Communications International Inc.:

We hereby consent to (i) the inclusion of our opinion letter dated April 21, 2010 to the Board of Directors of Qwest Communications International Inc. (the "Company") as Annex F to Amendment No. 1 to the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus forming part of the Registration Statement on Form S-4 of CenturyLink, Inc. ("CenturyLink") and the Company related to the merger of the Company and CenturyLink and (ii) the references made to our firm and to such opinion in the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus under the headings "Summary — The Merger and the Merger Agreement — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors". "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Qwest's Reasons for the Merger; Recommendation of the Merger by the Qwest Board of Directors" and "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors." In giving such consent, we do not admit that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), or the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission promulgated thereunder, nor do we admit that we are experts with respect to any part of the Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "expert" as used in the Securities Act or the rules and regulations of with respect to any part of the Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "expert" as used in the Securities Act or the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission promulgated thereunder. Such consent does not cover any amendments to the Registration Statement.

> /s/ Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. Deutsche Bank Securities Inc.

New York, New York July 15, 2010

CONSENT OF MORGAN STANLEY & CO. INCORPORATED

CONSENT OF MORGAN STANLEY & CO. INCORPORATED

We hereby consent to the use in Amendment No. 1 to the Registration Statement of CenturyLink, Inc. ("CenturyLink") on Form S-4 and in the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus of CenturyLink and Qwest Communications International Inc., which is part of the Registration Statement, of our opinion dated April 21, 2010 appearing as Annex G to such Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus, and to the description of such opinion and to the references to our name contained therein under the headings "Summary — The Merger and the Merger Agreement — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors" and "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Background of the Merger;" "— Qwest's Reasons for the Merger; Recommendation of the Merger by the Qwest Board of Directors; and "— Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors." In giving the foregoing consent, we do not admit that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, nor do we admit that we are experts with respect to any part of such Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "experts" as used in the Securities Act or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

MORGAN STANLEY & CO. INCORPORATED

By: /s/ Christopher Bartlett

Christopher Bartlett **Executive Director**

New York, New York July 15, 2010

Consent of Perella Weinberg Partners LP

We hereby consent to the use in Amendment No. 1 to the Registration Statement on Form S-4 of CenturyLink, Inc. (the "Registration Statement") and in the Proxy Statement/Prospectus of CenturyLink, Inc. and Qwest Communications International Inc., which is part of the Registration Statement, of our opinion dated April 21, 2010 appearing as Annex H to such Proxy Statement/Prospectus, and to the description of such opinion and to the references to our opinion dated April 21, 2010 appearing as Annex H to such Proxy Statement/Prospectus, and to the description of such opinion and to the references to our name contained therein under the headings "Summary — The Merger and the Merger Agreement — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors — Perella Weinberg Partners LP", "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Background of the Merger", "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger by the Qwest Board of Directors — Other Factors Considered by the Qwest Board of Directors" and "The Issuance of CenturyLink Shares and the Merger — Opinions of Qwest's Financial Advisors — Opinion of Perella Weinberg Partners LP." In giving the foregoing consent, we do not admit that we come within the category of persons whose consent is required under Section 7 of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, nor do we admit that we are experts with respect to any part of such Registration Statement within the meaning of the term "experts" as used in the Securities Act or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder. promulgated thereunder.

> /s/ PERELLA WEINBERG PARTNERS LP PERELLA WEINBERG PARTNERS LP

New York, New York July 16, 2010



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For Indian A as shown in A Politow the instructions provided by the recorded message. Directors recommends a vote FOR Proposals 1 and 2. For Against Abstain For Against Abstain 1. A proposal to approve the issuance of shares of CenturyLink 2. A proposal to approve the adjournment of the Meeting, if common stock in connection with the merger contemplated by necessary, to solicit additional proxies if there are not the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of April 21, 2010, sufficient votes for the proposal to issue CenturyLink by and among Owest Communications International Inc., the common stock in connection with the merger. Company, and SB44 Acquisition Company, as such agreement may be amended from time to time. 3. In their discretion to vote upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting. B Non-Voting Items Change of Address Please print new address below. C Authorized Signatures — This section must be completed for your vote to be counted. — Date and Sign Below Please sign exactly as name appears herein. When signing as executor, administrator, attorney, trustee or guardian, please give full title as such. If a corporation, please sign in full corporate name by president or other authorized officer. If a partnership, please sign in partnership name by authorized persons. Date (mm/dd/yyyy) — Please print date below. Signature 1 — Please keep signature within the box. Signature 2 — Please keep signature within the box. C 1234567890 J N T MR A SAMPLE (THIS AREA IS SET UP TO ACCOMMODATE 140 CHARACTERS) MR A SAMPLE AND 0 2 A V 0 2 6 3 4 7 1 MR A SAMPLE AND MR A SAMPLE AND MR A SAMPLE AND + 017W0B.

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Proxy - CENTURYLINK, INC.

THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The undersigned believy constitutes and appoints Gire F. Pket, III or Stacey W. Golf, or either of them, proxies for the undersigned, with full power of substitution, to increased the undersigned and to vote all of the shares of common spock and voting preferred stock (collectively, the "Voting Shares") of CenturyLink, inc. other "Company" that the undersigned is smilled to vote at the species meeting of shareholders of the Company to be held or August 34, 2010, and at any and of adeleroments thereof (the "Meeting").

In addition to serving us a Proxy, that card will also serve as instructions to each agent (policidently, the "Agents") of the Company's dividend reinvestment point or employee stack purchase plans (policided, the "Plans") to vote in the manner designated on the reverse side bered the shares of the Company's common stock held as of July 13, 2010, in the name of any Agent and credited to any national of the underspeed in economics with any of the Plans. Upon timely rate of of this Proxy, property executed, all of your Voting Shares, inducting any deat in the name of any Agent, with he voted as specified.

The Board of Directors recommends that you vote FOR Items 1 and 2 listed on the reverse side hereof. If the Proxy is properly executed but he specific directions are given, and if your Voting Shares will be voted in accordance with those recommendations.

(Physica Ses Resorate Side)

□ IF YOU HAVE NOT VOTED VIA THE INTERNET OR TELEPHONE, FOLD ALONG THE PERFORATION, DETACH AND RETURN THE BOTTOM PORTION IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE. □ Proxy—CENTURYLINK, INC. THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS The undersigned hereby constitutes and appoints Glen F. Post, III or Stacey W. Goff, or either of them, proxies for the undersigned, with full power of substitution, to represent the undersigned and to vote all of the shares of common stock and voting preferred stock (collectively, the "Voting Shares") of CenturyLink, Inc. (the "Company") that the undersigned is entitled to vote at the special meeting of shareholders of the Company to be held on August 24, 2010, and at any and all adjournments thereof (the "Meeting"). In addition to serving as a Proxy, this card will also serve as instructions to each agent (collectively, the "Agents") of the Company's dividend reinvestment plan or employee stock purchase plans (collectively, the "Plans") to vote in the manner designated on the reverse side hereof the shares of the Company's common stock held as of July 13, 2010, in the name of any Agent and credited to any account of the undersigned in accordance with any of the Plans. Upon timely receipt of this Proxy, properly executed, all of your Voting Shares, including any held in the name of any Agent, will be voted as specified. The Board of Directors recommends that you vote FOR Items 1 and 2 listed on the reverse side hereof. If this Proxy is properly executed but no specific directions are given, all of your Voting Shares will be voted in accordance with these recommendations. (Please See Reverse Side)





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Special Meeting Voting Instruction Card

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. MMMMMMMMMMM MMMMMMMMMMMM C123456789 000004 000000000.000000 ext 000000000.000000 ext 000000000.000000 ext 000000000.000000 ext MR A SAMPLE DESIGNATION (IF ANY) 000000000.000000 ext 000000000.000000 ext ADD 1 Electronic Voting Instructions ADD 2 ADD 3 You can vote by Internet or telephone! ADD 4 Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! ADD 5 Instead of mailing your proxy, you may choose one of the two voting ADD 6 methods outlined below to vote your proxy. MMMMMMMMM VALIDATION DETAILS ARE LOCATED BELOW IN THE TITLE BAR. Proxies submitted by the Internet or telephone must be received by 1:00 a.m., Central Time, on August 19, 2010. Vote by Internet • Log on to the Internet and go to www.investorvote.com/CTL1 • Follow the steps outlined on the secured website. Vote by telephone • Call toll free 1–800–652–VOTE (8683) within the USA, US territories & Canada any time on a touch tone telephone. There is NO CHARGE to you for the call. Using a black ink pen, mark your votes with an X as shown in X • Follow the instructions provided by the recorded message. this example. Please do not write outside the designated areas. Special Meeting Voting Instruction Card 1234 5678 9012 345 3 IF YOU HAVE NOT VOTED VIA THE INTERNET OR TELEPHONE, FOLD ALONG THE PERFORATION, DETACH AND RETURN THE BOTTOM PORTION IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE. 3 A Proposals — The Board of Directors of the Company recommends that you vote FOR Items 1 and 2 listed below. Upon timely receipt of these instructions, properly executed, the Undersigned's Votes will be cast in the manner directed. If these instructions are properly executed but no specific directions are given with respect to any of the Undersigned's Allocable Votes or the Undersigned's Proportionate Votes, these votes will be east in accordance with the + Board's recommendations. 1. A proposal to approve the issuance of shares of CenturyLink common stock in connection with the merger contemplated by the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of April 21, 2010, by and among Qwest Communications International Inc., the Company, and SB44 Acquisition Company, as such agreement may be amended from time to time. For Against Abstain For Against Abstain A. Undersigned's B. Undersigned's Allocable Votes: Proportionate Votes: 2. A proposal to approve the adjournment of the Meeting, if necessary, to solicit additional proxies if there are not sufficient votes for the proposal to issue CenturyLink common stock in connection with the merger. For Against Abstain For Against Abstain A. Undersigned's B. Undersigned's Allocable Votes: Proportionate Votes: 3. The Trustee is hereby directed to authorize the Company's proxics to vote in their discretion upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting. B Non-Voting Items Change of Address Please print new address below. C Authorized Signatures — This section must be completed for your vote to be counted. — Date and Sign Below Please sign exactly as name appears herein. When signing as executor, administrator, attorney, trustee or guardian, please give full title as such. Date (mm/dd/yyyy) --- Please print date below. Signature 1 — Please keep signature within the box. Signature 2 — Please keep signature within the box. C 1234567890 J N T MR A SAMPLE (THIS AREA IS SET UP TO ACCOMMODATE 140 CHARACTERS) MR A SAMPLE AND MR A SAMPLE MMMMMMM1 U P X 0 2 6 3 4 7 3 MR A SAMPLE AND MR A SAMPLE AND MR A SAMPLE AND +

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VOTING INSTRUCTIONS — CENTURYLINK UNION 401(k) PLAN AND TRUST

The undersigned, acting as a "named fiduciary" of the above-referenced plan of CenturyLink, Inc., as asserted little "Plan"), hereby instructs T. Rowell Price Trust Cempany (the "Trustee"), as discretizative of the Plan, to vate at the special meeting of shareholders of CenturyLink, Inc. (the "Company") to be held on August 24, 2010, and any shid adjournments thereof (the "Meeting"), in the manner designated terrain (i) elicables of the Company's common stock held by the Trustee and credited to the Plan account of the undersigned as of July 13, 2010, in accordance with the provisions of the Plan (the "Undersigned"). Allocable votes allocable votes allocable to the understigned independence of the understigned on the other size of this card, and the number of votes allocable to the understigned independence of the company's common stock held by the Trustee as of July 12, 2010, as to which properly executed voting instructions are not limited prior to the voting ceading specified herein (referred to individually as the "Undersigned's Proportionate Votes" and collectively with the Undersigned's Allocable Votes as the "Vindersigned's Votes".

Please mark argu, care and return those instructions promotly using the enclosed envelope

FOR YOUR VOTES TO BE COUNTED, THE TRUSTEE MUST RECEIVE THIS CARD, PROPERLY COMPLETED, BY THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON AUGUST 19, 2010, OR MUST RECEIVE YOUR VOTING INSTRUCTIONS BY TELEPHONE OR THE INTERNET BY THE TIME SPECIFIED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS CARD.

3 IF YOU HAVE NOT VOTED VIA THE INTERNET OR TELEPHONE, FOLD ALONG THE PERFORATION, DETACH AND RETURN THE BOTTOM PORTION IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE. 3 VOTING INSTRUCTIONS — CENTURYLINK UNION 401(k) PLAN AND TRUST The undersigned, acting as a "named fiduciary" of the above—referenced plan of CenturyLink, Inc., as amended (the "Plan"), hereby instructs T. Rowe Price Trust Company (the "Trustee"), as directed trustee of the Plan, to vote at the special meeting of shareholders of CenturyLink, Inc. (the "Company") to be held on August 24, 2010, and any and all adjournments thereof (the "Meeting"), in the manner designated herein (i) all shares of the Company's common stock held by the Trustee and credited to the Plan account of the undersigned as of July 13, 2010, in accordance with the provisions of the Plan (the "Undersigned's Allocable Votes") which are listed to the right of the address of the undersigned printed on the other side of this card, and (ii) the number of votes allocable to the undersigned (determined pursuant to a formula specified in the Plan) that are attributable to all shares of the Company's common stock held by the Trustee as of July 13, 2010, as to which properly executed voting instructions are not timely received prior to the voting deadline specified herein (referred to individually as the "Undersigned's Proportionate Votes" and collectively with the Undersigned's Allocable Votes as the "Undersigned's Votes"). Please mark, sign, date and return these instructions promptly using the enclosed envelope. FOR YOUR VOTES TO BE COUNTED, THE TRUSTEE MUST RECEIVE THIS CARD, PROPERLY COMPLETED, BY THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON AUGUST 19, 2010, OR MUST RECEIVE YOUR VOTING INSTRUCTIONS BY TELEPHONE OR THE INTERNET BY THE TIME SPECIFIED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS CARD.